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ABSTRACT

This secondary social studies unit, part one of a series of four, contains 22 classroom activities that involve students in discovering their ethnicity. Students examine their attitudes toward ethnic groups, particularly African Americans, Irish Americans, Arab Americans, and Mexican Americans. The activities can easily be integrated into U.S. history, minority studies, world history, contemporary and world issues, and language arts courses; or they can be used as the basis for a minicourse. The self-contained activities were developed so that students can learn on their own with the teacher acting as coordinator and facilitator. Students answer questionnaires on the importance of ethnicity and on attitudes toward ethnic groups, interview their parents, compare what they call themselves ethnically and religiously with what others call them, and participate in a forced-choice activity that deals with individual and class feelings about ethnically related problems. Students gather data from a social-distance survey to derive hypotheses about relative social distance among the groups and themselves, and they are involved in an activity to check out "subconscious" racism. Student participation in the activities should be voluntary because some of the activities deal with sensitive areas. (Author/RM)

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ETHNICITY AND ME

Ethnic Heritage Studies Project

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An Experimental Unit

Developed by Gary R. Smith

Prepared by the Center for Teaching International Relations

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EHS 1/76

ETHNICITY AND ME — Teacher's Introduction

This unit has two primary objectives: (1) to involve students in discovering their own ethnicity; (2) to get students to examine some of their attitudes toward ethnic groups, particularly Afro-Americans, Irish-Americans, Arab-Americans and Mexican-Americans.

It is not the purpose of this unit to provide a precise definition of ethnicity or to encourage students to find one. Ethnicity is a factor in people's lives that can be dealt with in the absence of a definition. However, it is appropriate that we state the definition of the concept which we used as we created these materials.

Ethnicity is a pattern of self-identity based on a person's attitudes toward contemporary symbols of his ancestry and origin. It implies a distinct culture, a distinct set of values, beliefs and standards of behavior which are maintained by language, religion, cultural practices and territory. Ethnicity also implies shared beliefs, a sense of peoplehood, agreement on appropriate rules for social interaction, and common priorities and goals. An ethnic group is a collectivity within a larger society, which has a common ancestry and history. It includes a personal dimension--"I am what I call myself and who I choose to associate with."

This unit can be used independently of the other four units in the curriculum, or it can be used sequentially as outlined in the general introduction. In any case, it is a potpourri of approaches and activities designed to get at the objectives stated above, rather than a structured sequence. We would not expect your students to use all of the activities. Rather, they should choose activities that look most interesting to them. The idea is to provide a variety of ways of arriving at the same ends.

The materials were designed for use in grades 7-12 social studies classes. We see them as being particularly applicable in U.S. history, minority studies, world history, contemporary and world issues courses. This, of course, does not preclude their use in the language arts. Integration into existing curricula was a primary concern in the development of these materials. However, if you were to use the bulk of the five units you would have established a good base for a mini-course on ethnicity--a course that focused on general ethnicity rather than on specific ethnic groups.

Activities in this unit are student-centered. They were developed so that students could carry out much of the learning on their own, with you the teacher acting as coordinator and facilitator. Obviously, should this structure not appeal to you, you should feel free to restructure these materials to suit you and your students' needs. We do suggest, however, that you do not in any way force students to do the activities.

Some of the activities deal with some sensitive areas, and they also ask students to share thoughts on personal values. Participation should be voluntary. Evaluation can be a problem using this format, but we advise that you turn to the suggestions in the EVALUATIONS UNIT for help on that score.

EHS 1/76

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES:

(The order of activities listed below does not necessarily imply a teaching sequence.)

PART I: MY ETHNIC IDENTITY

1. HOW IMPORTANT IS ETHNICITY TO ME? - questionnaire designed to utilize students' family backgrounds to help them determine the role of ethnicity in their lives.

2. WHAT DO I CALL MYSELF? - students compare what they call themselves ethnically, religiously, etc., with what others would call them.

PART II: MY ETHNIC ATTITUDES

3. "HO-HUM, INTERESTING FACT, THAT'S A PROBLEM!" - forced-choice activity that gets at individual and class feelings about ethnically-related problems. Can be used as a pretest to find out where students are in terms of ethnic studies.

4. ME AND SOCIAL DISTANCE - utilizes the social distance scale as a way into measuring personal attitudes about ethnicity.

5. FILL IN THE BLANK - questionnaire which can be used to measure social distance between the student and any group.

6. MY ATTITUDES ABOUT AFRO-AMERICANS - adaptation of FILL IN THE BLANK.

7. MY ATTITUDES ABOUT IRISH-AMERICANS - " " " " " " "

8. MY ATTITUDES ABOUT ARAB-AMERICANS - " " " " " " "

9. MY ATTITUDES ABOUT MEXICAN-AMERICANS - " " " " " " "

10. COMPARING MY ATTITUDES - students use data gathered from the social distance surveys to arrive at hypotheses about relative social distance among the groups and themselves.

11. "AMERICAN OF THE YEAR" - contest in which candidates are presented, students vote for "best" choice for American of the Year. Gets at multi-loyalty aspect of ethnicity.

12. MR. SMITH'S WILL - activity designed to check out "subconscious" racism.

13. RANK ORDERING FEELINGS - students use data from "My Attitudes" series and Mr. Smith's Will to put their feelings in order--to set the stage for their psychological mindset before delving into the other attitudinal activities.

14. OK-NOT OK - one of two tests for opinions about ethnic groups and discriminatory practices.

15. WHO SHOULD IMMIGRATE? - second of the two tests for opinions about ethnic groups; focuses specifically on immigration policy.

16. "THE IMMIGRANT" - slide-tape show based on the Neil Sedaka song. Designed to get students to reflect on their opinions raised in WHO SHOULD IMMIGRATE?

17. MY PERSONALITY AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCES - self-test relating personal beliefs to ethnic attitudes; based on Gordon Allport material.

18. WHICH DIFFERENCES MATTER TO ME? - students pair off and attend various ethnic events, ceremonies, etc. to find out which they feel most/least comfortable with and why.

19. TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNICATION - role-playing exercise which has students inquire into how cultural and ethnic differences can influence our ability to communicate and understand each other.

20. ROLE SWITCH - invites students to change places with others of a different ethnic group for a period of a week; central objectives are to find out how comfortable they are in different roles and to gain some empathy for somewhat different lifestyles.

21. FACES - elicits students' views of ethnic and racial differences.

22. "HOW TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS FROM THE GAPS" - students look into news magazine media to see how images of ethnic groups are portrayed.

Title HOW IMPORTANT IS ETHNICITY TO ME?

Introduction

Why study ethnicity? There may be many reasons. Ethnicity may be important because you live in a neighborhood where people practice ethnic customs and beliefs. It may be important to understand why some groups of people dislike other groups of people. You might conclude that ethnicity is not very important in your life, but that it is in the lives of others. Hence, understanding ethnicity could provide a clue to understanding others around you. In any event, in this activity you are given a questionnaire to help you determine how much your ethnicity means to you.

Objectives

To recognize ethnicity in your personal and family life

To recognize some of the factors that determine ethnic affiliation and identity

Time 2-3 hours

Materials Needed One copy of the QUESTIONNAIRE
One copy of the CONCLUSIONS sheet

Procedure

Step 1 - Take the QUESTIONNAIRE home with you and fill it out as completely as you can. It may help to have a relative help you with some of the questions.

Step 2 - After you have filled out the QUESTIONNAIRE write in your responses to the items on the CONCLUSIONS sheet.

Step 3 - Bring the QUESTIONNAIRE and CONCLUSIONS sheets to class with you. Either in small groups or with the class as a whole, discuss the following:

1. Compare your answers on the CONCLUSIONS sheet with others in your class. How would you explain the fact that other students have different responses to the questions?

   Which questions do you feel would tell you most about your own ethnicity? About someone else's ethnicity?

2. Do you find that your ethnic background matters less to you than it does to others in the class? If so, why do you suppose this is true?

   Do you find that you are less/more concerned about your ethnic

affiliation than are your parents? Other relatives? How would you account for the different feelings about ethnicity in your family?

3. As an option to filling out the CONCLUSIONS sheet, write a summary statement or paragraph on the following topic and share it with others in your class: WHAT MY ETHNICITY MEANS TO ME.

HOW IMPORTANT IS ETHNICITY TO ME? QUESTIONNAIRE

Place a check mark (✓) by the items which you feel apply to you:

_____1. I attend the same church my parents attend.

_____2. My parents attend the same church their grandparents attend(ed).

_____3. I dress differently than other kids in my school.

_____4. I celebrate certain holidays that the majority of Americans do not.

_____5. I speak English with a heavy accent.

_____6. My religion requires that I not celebrate certain holidays in our nation.

_____7. I would prefer to marry (if at all) someone of my own religious and/or racial group.

_____8. Everyone in my home speaks English predominantly.

_____9. At least one of my parents came to the United States from another country.

____10. At least one of my grandparents came to the United States from another country.

____11. In my family we practice customs I would consider different than those of most Americans.

____12. My family feels that it is important that we attend events and ceremonies related to our national/religious background.

____13. We live in the city and neighborhood we do because we share certain customs and beliefs those around us hold.

____14. I frequently speak two languages.

____15. It is important for me and my family to socialize with people who have similar backgrounds.

____16. I feel it is important to keep family traditions alive.

____17. I feel it is important to use another language besides English.

____18. I would like to visit the country my family came from more than any other foreign country I can think of.

_____19. It bothers me when other people make fun of another group's customs and language.

_____20. I belong to a club or organization that is related to my family's religious and national background.

_____21. I was born in the United States.

_____22. My family has always spoken English.

_____23. My family name has always been the same, even generations ago.

HOW IMPORTANT IS ETHNICITY TO ME? CONCLUSIONS

Based on your responses to the QUESTIONNAIRE and your discussion with your parents or other relatives about the QUESTIONNAIRE, answer the questions below:

1. I am a member of a family with strong religious/language/social/customs ties. (If so, write down what each of these ties is. E.g., religious=Catholic; language=Spanish; social=live in same neighborhood as others in our group; customs=dress as do members of our religious, social group.)

2. These ties my family has are very important to me. Why, why not?

3. The emphasis on ethnic groups and on differences among peoples is dangerous. I feel we should all try to forget our cultural and ethnic differences and recognize ourselves as Americans first. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer, if you wish.

4. I feel that participating in events, practicing customs, and keeping my ties to an ethnic group are very important and have little or nothing to do with my being a good American. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer if you wish.

5. Recently, I have become more aware of my ethnic background and would like to find out more.

Agree_____ Disagree_____

6. The subject of ethnicity is NOT important to me at this time.

Yes_____ No_____

Title WHAT DO I CALL MYSELF?

Introduction

This activity asks you to think about two things: first, what name you think is most important to call yourself; second, what label or name you think others would apply to you. You may find that an ethnic label is inappropriate for you. You might wish to call yourself simply a human being, or an American, or a Catholic. This activity can be very interesting to you, especially if you compare your own label for yourself with what you think others would call you. Doing this activity is voluntary of course.

Objectives

To determine the label (or absence of one) you would apply to yourself

To compare your label for yourself with others' labels of you

Time one hour

Procedure:

Step 1 - Rank order the labels on the handout WHAT DO I CALL MYSELF? that apply to you. In other words, in order of importance to you, place a "1" by the label or group you feel most describes you, a "2" by the label of second-most importance, and so on. Remember that there are no right answers in this activity. If you find that one label means as much or as little as another, that is fine.

Step 2 - Fill in the two questions at the bottom of the handout.

Step 3 - If you wish, you may now share your responses to the two questions with others in the room. This is completely voluntary, of course.

Do all students in your class identify themselves the same way? How do you account for the differences in what other kids label themselves?

If you get a chance to compare what you call yourself and what others call you, how do you explain the differences?

How many students label themselves primarily according to ethnic group? Why do you suppose this is true?

WHAT DO I CALL MYSELF?

On your own, rank order the following labels according to their importance in your life. For example, if you feel it's most important to identify yourself as a unique individual, place the number "1" in the space in front of that label. If you would identify yourself as a Teenager second, place a "2" in front of that label. If you feel labels should not be important at all in your life, place a "1" by the item "prefer no label for myself," and do not bother to rank order the rest of the items.

_____American
_____Catholic
_____Protestant
_____Jew
_____Other religious group?_____
_____Teenager
_____Male
_____Female
_____Student
_____Athlete
_____Black
_____White
_____Mexican-American
_____Afro-American
_____Chicano(a)
_____Hispano
_____Spanish-American
_____Arab-American
_____Irish-American
_____Oriental
_____Native American
_____Other racial group?_____
_____Other ethnic group?_____
_____My given name
_____Human being
_____I prefer no label for myself
_____Labels other than those listed
_____
_____Unique individual

Most importantly, I call myself_____

_____

I think others would primarily label me_____

_____

Title "HO-HUM" - "INTERESTING FACT" - "THAT'S A PROBLEM!"

Introduction

One quick way to determine how you feel about ethnicity, race and certain related problems is by using the following exercise. You are given a set of cards with various pieces of data on them which are related to the concept of ethnicity and ethnic problems. As you view each piece of data, you are to react to it in one of three ways: (1) "Ho-Hum"; (2) "Interesting Fact"; or (3) "That's a Problem!". Then, by sharing with others reasons why you reacted as you did (e.g., "Why did some of you think the newspaper headline on welfare mothers was a problem?") you can get an idea of the variety of opinions and reactions to the cards.

Objectives

To recognize that what one perceives as passive information, others might view as a problem

To draw out a variety of opinions and reactions in a group to data associated with ethnicity

Time 30 minutes (Varies depending on the number of data cards used)

Materials Pack of data cards

Reproduction on chalkboard or a transparency of the following reaction chart:

	"Ho-Hum"	"Interesting Fact"	"That's a Problem!"
Card No. 1			
" 2			
" 3			
" 4			
" 5			
" 6			
" 7			
" 8			
" 9			
" 10			
etc.			

Procedure

1. As you look at and study each card, you are to react by raising your hand in one of the three categories: "Ho-Hum" -if the data doesn't seem to you of much importance; "Interesting Fact" -if it's interesting information; or "That's a Problem"-if you think the piece of data is a problem.

2. Go through the packet one card at a time. Study the information or image on the card. Then, when called upon to do so by your instructor (or another student) raise your hand to the appropriate response to that particular card. Count the number of hands for each of the three kinds of responses. Record the number under the appropriate column on a worksheet, chalkboard, or a transparency, to the right of the corresponding data card number. Repeat this step for each of the cards in the rest of the packet.

Debriefing

Go back through each card and share with others in your class why you answered as you did.

1

WELFARE MOTHERS SAY NO TO

STERILIZATION PROGRAM!

2

A traditional European frame of reference . . .

EUROPEAN	AFRICAN
master	slave
man	boy (with the alternatives of "stud," "uncle")
woman	girl (with the alternatives of "baby," "auntie")
man-woman relationship	boy-girl relationship
positive	negative
universal art	protest literature

3

The population of Mexico will double in the next 30 years.

4

If you were born Black, your chances of survival the first year of life would be about half that of a white baby.

Afro-Pyramid

The Afro Pyramid shown here was conceived through the influence of Amenhotep, an early African architect noted for his step-pyramid. Although not exactly a pyramid shape, the traditional style worn in West Africa is essentially an upswept Natural.

This is basically a layered hairstyle for women with long, full, kinky heads of hair. This hair style is most suitable for evening wear. Low necklines and light neck jewelry suit it best.

In preparing to style hair into the Afro-Pyramid, there are some grooming aids necessary: rubber bands, bobby pins and either an Afro puff or hairpiece.

7

According to immigration statistics, 25% of the increase in U.S. population this year will be due to immigration flow.

8

"We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone!"

9 *Pawnee Indian Homecoming and Pow Wow* (July 1-5), Pawnee, Oklahoma

"Voyager Days" (July 10), Crane Lake, Minnesota

National Basque Festival (July 3-4), Elko, Nevada

Scandinavian Days (July 10-11), Kenmore, North Dakota

Dutch Festival (July 13-14), Edgerton, Minnesota

Bohemian Mining Days (July 15-18), Cottage Grove, Oregon

Fort Coeur d'Alene Days (Mid-July), Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Summerfest (July 16-25), Minneapolis, Minnesota

Annual Winnebago Indian Pow Wow (July 22-25), Winnebago, Nebraska

Nordic Festival (July 23-25), Decorah, Iowa

Blessing of the Shrimp Fleet (July 25), Bayou La Batre, Alabama

Hill Cumorah Pageant (July 26-31), Palmyra, New York

10

Comparison of Negro and White Family Income—1968

Annual Income	*Negro Families*	*White Families*
Under $3,553 (Poverty level, less than $70 per week)	29%	8%
Under $5,000	45%	20%
$5,000–$9,999	35%	38%
$10,000 or more	21%	42%

Title ME AND SOCIAL DISTANCE[1]

Introduction

This activity is an adaptation of the scale first developed by Dr. E. S. Bogardus to measure social distance. The term social distance refers to people's attitudes about how intimate or removed they feel from an ethnic group(s)

Objective

To recognize social distance between you and selected ethnic groups

Time One class period

Procedure (Part I)

Step 1 - After each ethnic (racial) group, write in the appropriate number indicating your level of acceptance of that particular group. For example, after Chinese-Americans, you may wish to write the number seven if you would not admit Chinese-Americans to kinship by marriage. Write in only one number for each group.

Step 2 - After students have finished the social distance scale, the class should discuss and compare their responses. Then proceed to Part II of this activity for a discussion on scoring the responses to the social distance scale. Do not read Part II until you have finished Part I.

[1]This exercise is a variation of a student activity developed on pages 4-8 of THE RACIST READER, edited by G. McCuen, Greenhaven Press, 1974.

THE SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE

Categories of Acceptance of Ethnic Groups in America

1. I would expel them from my (this) country.
2. I would admit them to my country but only as visitors.
3. I would admit them to citizenship in my country.
4. I would admit them to employment in my country.
5. I would admit them as classmates in my school.
6. I would admit them as neighbors to my street.
7. I would admit them to my social club as personal friends.
8. I would admit them to kinship by marriage.

List of Ethnic Groups to be considered by the above scale:

Arab-Americans
Armenians
Chaldeans
Black-Americans
Canadians
Chinese-Americans
Slovak-Americans
Danireans
Anglo-Americans
Filipinos
Puerto-Ricans
Scandanavian-Americans
Mexican-Americans
Swedish-Americans
Wallonians
French-Americans
German-Americans
Greek-Americans
Native Americans
Irish-Americans
Italian-Americans
Japanese-Americans
Jews
Korean-Americans
Vietnamese
Polish-Americans
Pireneans
Russian-Americans
Turkish-Americans
Mexicans

Procedure (Part II)

Instructions for analyzing the social distance scale:

Step 1 - All students should read the following statement:
"Dr. Eugene Hartley used the Bogardus Scale on students in eight colleges. Among the forty-nine group designations used by him were "Danireans", "Pireneans", and "Wallonians". None of the students ever met a Danirean, a Pirenean, or a Wallonian. No one ever has. They are names of non-existent peoples. Yet the students who revealed a great deal of intolerance toward other groups had similar attitudes toward these fictious groups."
(From E. W. Newman, THE HATE READER, (Dobbs Ferry N. Y.: Oceana Press, 1964) p. 15.)

Step 2 - Break into groups of four to six and discuss the following questions:

A. What groups received high scores or degrees of acceptance on the social distance scale? Why? The score of eight is the highest score any one group can receive.

B. How did religion affect the scores?

C. What groups received the lowest scores? Why?

D. What level of acceptance do your scores indicate for the fictious groups DANIREANS, PIRENEANS AND WALLONIANS? How do you explain your scoring for these groups?

E. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement: "An individual who is intolerant toward one group is likely to be intolerant towards other groups."

Step 3 - The entire class should compare the results of the small group discussions.

(THIS ACTIVITY WITH THE SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE CAN BE USED SEVERAL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR TO SEE IF ATTITUDES HAVE CHANGED.)

Title FILL IN THE BLANK

Objectives

To measure social distance between you and any group--racial, religious political, ethnic--of your choosing

To infer from the survey your attitudes about the group

Time One class period

Procedure

1. To check out your perceptions of a group you are interested in, place the name of the group in the blank provided.

2. Answer the questions.

3. Discussion questions:

   A. Volunteer your responses to certain selected questions in the survey.

   B. Are there significant differences in your responses and those of others in your class? If so, how do you account for these differences?

   C. Did you know that other members of the class had different groups on their questionnaires than you did? If not, do you think this made a difference in your responses? Why? Why not?

QUESTIONNAIRE

The following list of sentences expresses various attitudes toward an ethnic group. Examine each statement carefully. Mark (SA) if you strongly agree with a statement. Mark (A) if you agree with a statement. Mark (D) if you disagree with a statement. Mark (SD) if you strongly disagree with a statement. Mark (U) if you are undecided.

I think _____

_____1. have too many irritating habits and manners

_____2. are similar in behavior to other people

_____3. have superior athletic ability

_____4. will seek to exploit others

_____5. must be dealt with forcefully since democratic procedures will never make them behave properly

_____6. tend to keep to themselves and are suspicious of others

_____7. usually meddle too much and interfere with other people's business

_____8. are generally tolerant of other people

_____9. are usually intolerant of other people and new ideas

____10. often lack initiative and dependability

____11. are extremely ambitious, capable, and intelligent

____12. are lazy and ignorant

____13. are morally superior to others

____14. discriminate against others

____15. usually become wealthy by manipulating and cheating unsuspecting people

____16. are satisfied with their lot and fair in their dealings with others

____17. are never satisfied and are always seeking more money and power

_____18. usually try to exert control and influence over others

_____19. are behind the Communist menace in the United States

_____20. will always remain a foreign and alien element

_____21. have money and power out of all proportion to their numbers

_____22. are mostly patriotic individuals

_____23. place foreign loyalties above patriotism and love of country

_____24. must be prevented from moving into certain neighborhoods

_____25. put more emphasis on material than spiritual values

_____26. are fair with each other but ruthless in their dealings with other people

_____27. will more than likely succeed in education

_____28. prove to be as trustworthy as other people

_____29. should be permitted to live in any neighborhood

_____30. control most of our powerful economic and political institutions

_____31. should be allowed to intermarry with any group

_____32. fail to keep up their personal appearances and neighborhoods

_____33. are as friendly as other people

_____34. practice strange customs

_____35. lack imagination

_____36. are very sociable

_____37. are cunning and proud

_____38. will often display compassion for people in trouble

_____39. display efficiency in most things

_____40. are often too emotional

Title MY ATTITUDES ABOUT AFRO-AMERICANS

Introduction

This is an adaptation of FILL IN THE BLANK. Answer the same questions for Afro-Americans as you did in that activity. After you have done the same for three other groups, you will have an opportunity to compare your responses for each of these groups.

Objective

To generate data from which to compare social distance between you and four ethnic groups

Time 20 minutes

Procedure

Step 1 - Fill out the questionnaire MY ATTITUDES ABOUT AFRO-AMERICANS.

Step 2 - Proceed to next survey, MY ATTITUDES ABOUT IRISH-AMERICANS.

Use a copy of the QUESTIONNAIRE (pages 15-16) included in FILL IN THE BLANK for this exercise. Fill in the blank at the top of the QUESTIONNAIRE with "Afro-Americans".

Title MY ATTITUDES ABOUT IRISH-AMERICANS

Introduction

This is an adaptation of FILL IN THE BLANK. Answer the same questions for Irish-Americans as you did in that activity. After you have done the same for three other groups, you will have an opportunity to compare your responses for each of these groups.

Objective

To generate data from which to compare social distance between you and four ethnic groups

Time 20 minutes

Procedure

Step 1 - fill out the questionnaire MY ATTITUDES ABOUT IRISH-AMERICANS.

Step 2 - Proceed to next survey, MY ATTITUDES ABOUT ARAB-AMERICANS.

Use a copy of the QUESTIONNAIRE (pages 15-16) included in FILL IN THE BLANK for this exercise. Fill in the blank at the top of the QUESTIONNAIRE with "Irish-Americans".

Title MY ATTITUDES ABOUT ARAB-AMERICANS

Introduction

This is an adaptation of FILL IN THE BLANK. Answer the same questions for Arab-Americans as you did in that activity. After you have done the same for three other groups, you will have an opportunity to compare your responses for each of these groups.

Objective

To generate data from which to compare social distance between you and four ethnic groups

Time 20 minutes

Procedure

Step 1 - Fill out the questionnaire MY ATTITUDES ABOUT ARAB-AMERICANS

Step 2 - Proceed to final survey, MY ATTITUDES ABOUT MEXICAN-AMERICANS

Use a copy of the QUESTIONNAIRE (pages 15-16) included in FILL IN THE BLANK for this exercise. Fill in the blank at the top of the QUESTIONNAIRE with "Arab-Americans".

Title MY ATTITUDES ABOUT MEXICAN-AMERICANS

Introduction

This is an adaptation of FILL IN THE BLANK. Answer the same questions for Mexican-Americans as you did in that activity. After you have done the same for three other groups, you will have an opportunity to compare your responses for each of these groups.

Objective

To generate data from which to compare social distance between you and four ethnic groups.

Time 20 minutes

Procedure

Step 1 - Fill out the questionnaire MY ATTITUDES ABOUT MEXICAN-AMERICANS.

Step 2 - Proceed directly to next activity, COMPARING MY ATTITUDES.

Use a copy of the QUESTIONNAIRE (pages 15-16) included in FILL IN THE BLANK for this exercise. Fill in the blank at the top of the QUESTIONNAIRE with "Mexican-Americans".

Title COMPARING MY ATTITUDES

Objectives

To recognize that social distance between you and ethnic groups may vary depending upon the group

To infer reasons why there may be differences in your attitudes about the four groups

To compare the class' attitudes about each of the four groups

Time One hour

Procedure

Step 1 - Tabulate your responses on the RESPONSE TABLE. The idea here is to get all of the data from the four surveys together on one sheet. (You may wish to add the results from FILL IN THE BLANK as well.)

Step 2 - Are there differences in your responses among the four groups? Which questions showed different responses? Can you explain the differences?

Step 3 - Looking at the RESPONSE TABLE, which of the four groups do you see yourself farthest from socially? Closest to socially? Explain why. (Your answers can vary a great deal here. It may be that in some cases you're just not familiar with the group, hence there is more "distance" between you and the group. It may be that relatives, media, and your peer group have influenced some of your attitudes about these groups. If so, can you pinpoint which attitudes you might have picked up from relatives, media or peer group?)

Step 4 - Compile a class FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLE. Put the data on the chalkboard or a transparency. What are some of the class' attitudes toward these groups? Does one of the groups tend to be more socially acceptable to the class as a whole than does another? If so, which ones and why?

Step 5 - As a class, discuss what stimuli you think influenced you to behave and think about these groups as you do.

RESPONSE TABLE

Item #	Strongly Disagree				Disagree				Uncertain				Agree				Strongly Agree			
	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.
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RESPONSE TABLE

Item #	Strongly Disagree				Disagree				Uncertain				Agree				Strongly Agree			
	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.
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FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Item #	Strongly Disagree				Disagree				Uncertain				Agree				Strongly Agree			
	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.
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FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Item #	Strongly Disagree				Disagree				Uncertain				Agree				Strongly Agree			
	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.	Af. Am.	Ir. Am.	Ab. Am.	Mex. Am.
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Title "AMERICAN OF THE YEAR"

Procedure

You and five other students in your room have been selected to serve on a national election committee to select the "American of the Year." Below are listed candidates for the award. You and the rest of your group must be unanimous in your decision to choose the one best candidate for the honor. A spokesperson from your group should explain to others in the class why each candidate was selected or rejected. Your group has 20 minutes to make its decision.

Candidates:

Mr. Ronald Jenkins, Scarsdale, New York. Mr. Jenkins is sponsored by the Scarsdale University Health Club. Age 31 - married 13 years, 2 children - salesman, Intertech Corporation - graduated with honors from Cornell University - President, Americans for America, Scarsdale chapter - President, Fourth of July Club - Secretary-Treasurer, Scarsdale chapter of the International Organization of Odd Fellows - hobbies include fishing, hunting, baseball, football, basketball, physical fitness.

Ms. Loretta McDole, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Sponsor = League of Housewives - Age, 52. Married 25 years, 5 children. Housewife. Eleventh grade education. Secretary-Treasurer of the Santa Fe Scottish Rites Organization; President of the United Scottish Clans of America - Treasurer PTA and Santa Fe League of Housewives - hobbies include sewing, cooking, nostalgia.

Denise Rodriguez, Denver, Colorado. Sponsored by the United Mexican-Americans for Action - Age 21 - single, lives alone, no children - Director, Center for Women in Politics - MA degree in Sociology from University of Colorado - Consultant, Mexico in America Institute; President, UMAS (at University of Colorado during college years) - hobbies include: reading, swimming, tennis.

George Ahmad, Detroit, Michigan. Sponsor: Detroit Chamber of Commerce - Age 37 - married, wife and 3 children live with his parents in Lebanon - has recently applied for U.S. citizenship - Consultant, Midoc Engineering Co. - Doctorate in Chemical Engineering from American University, Beirut, Lebanon - listed in Detroit's "Who's Who in the Arab-American Community" - Member, Americans for Democratic Action - hobbies: writing, reading, boating, fishing.

Janet Holloway, Waldo, Kansas. Sponsored by University of Kansas Newman Club. Age 18 - married, no children - student in physics - worked her way through all schooling (was raised in an orphanage in Salina, Kansas) - Miss America candidate from Kansas last year - hobbies: piano, ballet, macrame.

Jack Fortrana (J.B.), Atlanta, Georgia. Sponsored by American Manufacturers Association - Age, 61 - married 41 years, 3 children - President of the Board, Superking Grocers - inherited multi-million dollar fortune from his father - Exalted Ruler Atlanta Elks Club; member Atlanta Chapter of the NAACP; Atlanta Boys' Club sponsor; Member of Boys' Club Board, Rotary Club - contributor to many charities (refuses to claim his contributions as income tax deductions) - plans to will $5 million to the United Negro College Fund; hobbies include: golf, reading.

Questions:

1. What qualities were most important to your group in choosing a winner?

2. What qualities were least important to your group?

3. If your group could not arrive at a winner in the allotted time, why not?

4. Which one of the candidates comes closest to your image of the "ideal American"? Explain.

5. How much did ethnic background affect your group's decision? Explain.

6. If none of the candidates fit your group's image of the ideal "American of the Year", write out a profile of a hypothetical person who should receive such an award. Which qualities do you think are most important? What is this person's ethnic and national background?

Title "MR. SMITH'S WILL"

Objective

To help clarify values regarding racial discrimination

Time One class period

Procedure

1. Divide your class into two groups. Separate the groups into two different rooms.

2. Distribute copies of "Mr. Smith's Will" (white donor) to one group and "Mr. Smith's Will" (black donor) to the other group. Instruct each group that they have 20 minutes in which to reach group consensus on the two questions at the bottom of the slip of paper. If there is a great deal of disagreement among members of the group, they can decide to issue a majority report and a minority report if they so desire.

   NOTE: Neither group should know that the other group has a different version at this point. It is sufficient to tell curious students that both groups have Mr. Smith's will.

3. At the end of the 20 minute group discussion period, bring both groups together for debriefing.

Debriefing Questions

1. (Allow students to discover for themselves that there were two different versions of Mr. Smith's Will.) Begin with the following question: Which man, Mr. Smith or his lawyer, would your group side with and why?

2. What, if any, were some of the minority opinions within your group?

3. Were there significant differences in the answers between the two groups? If so, why?

4. What are your conclusions about the morality of what Mr. Smith did regardless of which racial groups were involved?

MR. SMITH'S WILL

Mr. Smith is a wealthy white citizen who is lying on his death-bed. Present in the bedroom is Mr. Smith's lawyer who has arrived on the scene to make out Mr. Smith's will. Mr. Smith has decided to leave his money to build a hospital that will provide free medical care for black persons. The lawyer argues that the decision is unfair and discriminatory since it excludes members of other races, and that it perpetuates racial inequality in our society.

WHICH MAN, MR. SMITH OR HIS LAWYER, WOULD YOU SIDE WITH?

WHY?

MR. SMITH'S WILL

Mr. Smith is a wealthy black citizen who is lying on his death-bed. Present in the bedroom is Mr. Smith's lawyer who has arrived on the scene to make out Mr. Smith's will. Mr. Smith has decided to leave his money to build a hospital that will provide free medical care for black persons. The lawyer argues that the decision is unfair and discriminatory since it excludes members of other races, and that it perpetuates racial inequality in our society.

WHICH MAN, MR. SMITH OR HIS LAWYER, WOULD YOU SIDE WITH?

WHY?

Title RANK ORDERING FEELINGS

Introduction

Each day of our lives we must make choices between competing alternatives. This activity is designed to give you practice in choosing from among alternatives and then an opportunity to discuss your choices with others in your class if you so choose. It helps to demonstrate that many issues related to ethnicity require much more thought and consideration than we tend to give them.

Objective

To provide a means for further value clarification

Time One hour

Procedure

Step 1 - This is a forced choice exercise. That means that in some cases you may not like any of the choices, but we ask that you respond anyway. The purpose is to get you to make decisions about alternatives and, therefore, to help you inquire into your own ethnic attitudes. Simply take the RANK ORDERING FEELINGS sheet and place a "1" by the item you most agree with, a "2" by the second-most agreed with item, etc.

Step 2 - With a group of three or four students, discuss your Rank Ordering preferences.

Step 3 - After a small group discussion, write a sentence or two on the following: HOW I FEEL ABOUT ETHNICITY AT THE PRESENT TIME.

RANK ORDERING FEELINGS

1. Which would you rather be?
   _____a Black-American
   _____a Mexican-American
   _____an Irish-American
   _____an Arab-American

2. In our school, what would you most like in relation to integration?
   _____a completely integrated school
   _____separate schools for different groups
   _____combination of the two above with freedom to choose one's own school

3. Where would you least like to live?
   _____in a ghetto in an urban Northern city
   _____in a barrio in an urban Southwestern city
   _____in a small rural Southern town

4. Which of these jobs would you like most to have?
   _____school teacher on an Indian reservation
   _____director of an inner city project
   _____co-ordinator of social action projects for a liberal suburban church

5. What do you consider the most serious problem in our cities today?
   _____discrimination in jobs and housing
   _____transportation
   _____hunger
   _____over-crowding

6. Which would you be most willing to do?
   _____serve in the armed forces
   _____serve in the Peace Corps
   _____work in an urban ghetto
   _____work on an Indian reservation

7. If you were a slave coming across the ocean on a slave ship, which would you most likely do?
   _____revolt
   _____jump overboard
   _____refuse to eat
   _____go along with the situation

8. If you went to your local supermarket and there were people outside passing out leaflets asking you not to shop there because of poor working conditions for the Mexican-American lettuce pickers and grape-growers, what would you do?
   _____shop there anyway
   _____go to another market for your food
   _____shop at the picketed supermarket but not buy lettuce or grapes
   _____join the picketers and help pass out leaflets

9. What would you do if you saw racial or ethnic conflict starting in your school in the lunchroom or the lavatory?

_____go immediately to the principal's office and tell school officials about it
_____stay as far away as you could from the fracas
_____try to break it up
_____join the altercation

Title OK - NOT OK

Introduction

In this exercise you are given a series of statements regarding certain discriminatory practices. After responding to all statements as either "OK" or "NOT OK', you might discuss where you "draw the line" in terms of freedom and encroachment on another group's rights.

Objectives

To decide behavior that is acceptable and unacceptable based on your value preferences

To construct criteria for accepting/not accepting certain kinds of discriminatory behavior from a personal point of view

Time One class period

Procedure

1. Distribute copies of OK - NOT OK: Eight statements and the Response Sheet.

2. Allow 5-10 minutes for students to mark their answers on the Response Sheet.

3. By a show of hands, record class responses to each of the eight items on the chalkboard.

4. Go through each of the items eliciting opinions on what was OK and what wasn't OK according to the class.

5. Write a paragraph on the following: I BELIEVE IT IS RIGHT FOR RELIGIOUS/RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS TO PRACTICE THEIR CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS AS LONG AS...

OK - NOT OK: EIGHT STATEMENTS

Below are eight statements you are to respond to. As you read each statement, decide whether you think the situation described is OK or NOT OK. We are asking for your personal opinions. When you've made your decision, place the number of the statement in the appropriate column on the Response Sheet.

1. A religious group decides to continue its practice of polygamy despite laws in the United States specifically prohibiting polygamy.

2. A religious group expels its members for practicing divorce, intermarriage and drinking.

3. A wealthy member of the community dies and leaves $500,000 to an all white boys school. A clause in the man's will stipulates that the school must not allow members of the opposite sex or of other races to attend.

4. A school schedules most of its activities on a night when most students are involved in church affairs.

5. Spanish speaking students refuse to take classes unless all reading materials and instruction are in Spanish.

6. An African heritage bookstore refuses to sell its books to Whites.

7. A privately owned country club refuses admission to all but Caucasians.

8. A hospital financed by a particular religious group provides free services for members of the religious group, but charges for services rendered to members of other faiths.

RESPONSE SHEET

OK	NOT OK

Title "WHO SHOULD IMMIGRATE?"

Introduction

If you agree that it is necessary to restrict immigration, the question is, on what basis? This activity provides you with an opportunity to examine a list of statements and develop criteria you and your classmates feel should determine immigration policy.

Time One class period

Objectives

To clarify personal values regarding the acceptance of immigrants into the United States

To compare your personal values with those of the class as a whole

To make decisions via a "forced choice" model

Procedure

1. Distribute copies of "WHO SHOULD IMMIGRATE?"

2. By means of a show of hands, count the number of students who agree with each statement. Then, count the number of students who disagree. Keep a record of responses on the chalkboard.

3. Questions:

   A. Recognizing what John F. Kennedy said about the United States, that we are a "nation of immigrants," how many of the criteria the class agreed upon would exclude students' ancestors from immigration?

   B. Why would committing a felony in the "native" land or becoming involved in subversive activities in a foreign land be used to keep foreigners from entering the U.S.?

   C. How did the class respond to the question of granting special privileges to immigrants who were threatened by famine in their native lands? What reasons do students give for responding as they did?

   D. If you wanted to emigrate to another country and that country devised an immigration policy based on the criteria your class agreed upon, would you be able to emigrate?

   E. Go through the list of ten items one at a time to discuss with each other your reasons for responding as you did.

4. From the list of agreed-upon items (51% of the class vote determines agreement), have a committee make up an application form to be used by persons wishing to apply for immigrant status in the United States. Have the committee explain why the questions and types of information they've included are important.

"WHO SHOULD IMMIGRATE?"[1]

Look at each of the following criteria which might be used to determine whether or not an immigrant should be allowed into the United States. In each case, circle whether you agree or disagree with the criterion described. If you are uncertain, leave the item blank.

The candidate for immigration should:

1. already speak English before he/she is allowed to enter the U.S.
   AGREE DISAGREE

2. be required to demonstrate that he/she can read and write their native language before being allowed to enter the U.S.
   AGREE DISAGREE

3. not have committed a felony in his native country.
   AGREE DISAGREE

4. not have been involved in any subversive activities in his native country.
   AGREE DISAGREE

5. be made to sign a loyalty oath to the United States as a condition of his being allowed to immigrate.
   AGREE DISAGREE

6. be given special consideration if he has tried to overthrow an autocratic government in his native land and is being persecuted for his political activity.
   AGREE DISAGREE

7. be given special consideration if his country has been constantly threatened by famine.
   AGREE DISAGREE

8. be given special consideration if he has been educated in the U.S.
   AGREE DISAGREE

9. be given special consideration if he has friends here.
   AGREE DISAGREE

10. not be allowed to enter the U.S. if he lives in a country whose population is increasing rapidly.
    AGREE DISAGREE

What additional qualifications would you include? (List on the back.)

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[1]Based on model suggested in "The Immigrant's Experience," AEP Public Issues Series (Columbus, Ohio: Xerox Corp., 1969), p. 38.

Title "THE IMMIGRANT": Slide-Tape Show

Introduction

A central theme of ethnicity and ethnic heritage is immigration policy. The slide-tape show is designed to raise questions about our image as "a nation of nations" and our immigration history and the limitations of immigration policy. The contrast between the Neil Sedaka song and the visual images and words might stimulate student discussion regarding the inconsistency between what some say America is and what it ought to be.

Objectives

To recognize the role of immigration and immigration policy as central in building and maintaining ethnic identity

To react emotionally to the paradox of what America is in practical terms, contrasted with its projected ideals

To identify reasons why ethnic groups might choose to retain their identities given attitudes and policies toward immigrants and immigration

Time One class period

Equipment needed Carousel projector/pulsated cassette tape player

Procedure

1. With a minimum of introduction show the presentation "The Immigrant."

2. Debriefing:

   A. What are your initial thoughts and feelings about what you've just seen? (Allow about 5-10 minutes for this discussion.)

   B. Do you think immigration in America is presented fairly in the show? If not, why not? If so, why?

   C. The words interspersed among the pictures were a combination of the Lazrus poem on the Statue of Liberty and the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act of 1952. What was the point of the juxtaposition of these two things? (The idea in the mind of the developer was to show the contrast between what America's ideals are, that is, that America welcomed and should continue to welcome all to its shores, and what is reality both historically and at present. That is, there are practical as well as ethnocentric reasons why the ideals are never quite fulfilled. Discuss whatever students think is important here.)

D. A major argument used by those favoring immigration restriction is that it is necessary in order to curb population growth. Interested students should gather data which would indicate the place of immigration in population growth in the United States. How would you reconcile the ideal of America being a "welcomer" to all and the practical limitations of not being able to do so.

E. Considering what you have seen, why would some groups choose to maintain their ethnic identities and their ethnic heritages while others would not? (A possible answer here is the degree of acceptance on the part of those living in America before the immigrant arrival. Ethnic identity is one way of solidifying power if a particular group feels it does not fully share in the benefits of the host society. At the same time, some ethnic groups may never subordinate their ethnic identities to to a national identity, that is, of being a Mexican-American for example, to being an American. They feel that ethnicity is more important, is more meaningful than national allegiance, although national allegiance can have great motivation and appeal at the same time.)

Title MY PERSONALITY AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

Introduction

This activity is a self-test relating personal beliefs to ethnic attitudes. It is based on Gordon Allport material.

Objectives

To examine some characteristics of prejudice

To explore your own feelings about prejudice

To discover whether you can recognize prejudicial statements

Time One class period

Procedure

Below you will find statements of opinion in quotation marks. You and the rest of your group are to discuss for the next 15 minutes which of the statements have anything to do with prejudice. Elect a spokesperson for your group. He/she should be ready to report the group's conclusions at the end of the 15 minute discussion period.

Circle those statements the group feels have very little to do with prejudice.

STATEMENT 1: "There is only one right way to do anything."

STATEMENT 2: "If a person does not watch out somebody will make a sucker out of him."

STATEMENT 3: "It would be better if teachers would be more strict."

STATEMENT 4: "Only people who are like myself have a right to be happy."

STATEMENT 5: "Girls should learn only things that are useful around the house."

STATEMENT 6: "There will always be war; it is part of human nature."

STATEMENT 7: "The position of the stars at the time of your birth tells your character and personality."

My group has concluded that the statements circled above have very little to do with prejudice. Our reasons for making the conclusions are as follows:

I personally agree-disagree with the other members of my group because:

The Prejudiced Personality

The exercise you've just completed might have proved helpful in sorting out elements of personality that tend to characterize prejudice. According to Gordon W. Allport, a famous sociologist, all of the beliefs your class dealt with on the page describe the prejudiced personality:

According to Allport, prejudiced people tend to endorse the following beliefs:

1. There is only one right way to do anything.
2. If a person does not watch out somebody will make a sucker out of him.
3. It would be better if teachers would be more strict.
4. Only people who are like myself have a right to be happy.
5. Girls should learn only things that are useful around the house.
6. There will always be war; it is part of human nature.
7. The position of the stars at the time of your birth tells your character and personality.

Certain types of propositions are endorsed by highly prejudiced more often than by tolerant people:

The world is a hazardous place in which people are basically evil and dangerous.

We do not have enough discipline in our American way of life.

On the whole, I am more afraid of swindlers than I am of gangsters.

Says Allport, "At first sight these propositions seem to have nothing to do with prejudice. Yet it is proved that all of them have. This finding can only mean that prejudice is frequently woven firmly into a style of life."

Do you agree with Allport or not? Explain.

How would you go about finding out whether or not all of the statements would apply to a prejudiced personality? Is there any way to measure? If you cannot think of a way to measure the statements in relation to prejudice, does any of the exercise really matter?

Title "WHICH DIFFERENCES MATTER TO ME?"[1]

Introduction

How can you tell which ethnic differences really matter to you? In the exercise below you can check out some personal feelings about ethnic differences.

Objective

To recognize situations in which you feel comfortable/uncomfortable with ethnic differences

Time 1-2 hours (varies)

Procedure

Step 1 - Choose a partner, one with whom you feel at ease.

Step 2 - Choose from among the ethnic experiences listed on the next page at least one of the items to observe.

Step 3 - Make arrangements to observe the event or events. Check with local newspapers, events calendars, etc. to make the arrangements.

Step 4 - Discuss the following with your partner after you have attended and observed the event together:

1. How did you feel while you were observing the event or ceremony?
2. Were you asked, in any way, to participate? How did you react to the suggestion?
3. If you attended more than one event, which did you find most unfamiliar to you? Which was most familiar to you? Why?
4. Would you be interested in going out again and attending another of the items listed? Explain.

Evaluation

Make a scrapbook, write an essay or make a bulletin board about the event or ceremony and your feelings toward it.

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[1]Adapted from "When Do I Fit?", Human Sciences Program, Experimental Edition, 1974. Biological Sciences Curriculum Study Project, Boulder, Colorado.

"WHICH DIFFERENCES MATTER TO ME?"

Suggested list of Ethnic Experiences (Choose at least one; two or three would be even better!)

Marriage: Wedding ceremonies, bridal showers, parties, receptions, etc. Polish, Italian, Jewish, Greek, Buddhist, Satanic, etc. wedding.

Funerals: Church or funeral home service, graveside service. Irish wake, Indian burial ceremony, cremation, etc.

Other Religious Ceremonies: Synagogue service, mass, church services, Bible-prayer meeting, Mormon service, etc.

Special Religious Ceremonies: Protestant baptism, Catholic baptism, Jewish circumcision, Christian confirmations, Bar and Bas Mitzvahs, Ojo de Dios, etc.

Schools: Look in your yellow pages for types of schools in your community--Catholic, Greek, Seventh Day Adventist, Hebrew, etc.

Ethnic Holidays: Chinese New Year (Hsin Nien), St. Patrick's Day, May Day, Trung Thu, Pesadas, Cinco de Mayo, Tet, Custer Day, Sham al-Nessim, Tango-No Sekku, The Asking Festival, July 4th, American Indian Day, Martin Luther King Day, etc.

Ceremonies of Ethnic or Religious Organizations: Japanese Association, Sons of Italy, Masonic Order, Eastern Star, Job's Daughters, B'nai B'rith, NAACP, Church Youth Groups, Knights of Columbus, Danish Brotherhood, St. Peter Claver Society, etc.

LOOK IN YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER AND CHECK FOR SPECIAL ETHNIC EVENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY. THE ABOVE LIST IS ONLY MEANT TO BE SUGGESTIVE OF THE KINDS OF EXPERIENCES YOU CAN OBSERVE.

Title TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Introduction

It has been estimated that about 90% of human communication is non-verbal. Whether or not the actual percentage is correct, such an estimate raises an important point about cross-cultural communication: It is probably as important to understand the cultural and ethnic variations in behavior, customs and manners as it is to learn another group's language or dialect. Understanding and adjusting to these variations can mean the difference between successful and unsuccessful communication.

The following role-playing situations are designed to provide an opportunity for students to look into the function of some of these variations in non-verbal behavior.

Objectives

To recognize the use of nonverbal communication as providing clues to human understanding

To recognize the variations in nonverbal communication across cultures

To infer about behavioral patterns based on descriptions of hypothetical roles

To recognize that customs are products of culture, that North Americans may have customs and manners that may seem strange to others in the world, and to thereby, reduce ethnocentric bias

Time One or two class periods

Suggested Procedure

Step 1 - Look through the five role-playing situations and choose one or two to do. (Note: each role-playing situation consists of two sheets of the same color.)

Step 2 - Ask for volunteers from your class to role-play. Explain that the goal of this activity is to learn more about the variety of human behavior that influences communication in the world. (It is suggested that you not pressure students into the activity.) Each role-playing situation requires four people, or two pairs. Preferably, each pair in the foursome should consist of a boy and a girl, although this is not absolutely necessary for a successful experience.

HOW TO PROCEED WITH ONE ROLE-PLAY SITUATION:

Step 3 - Give one pair of students in the foursome one of the cards marked B, and instruct them that they are to leave the room, study their roles for about 5 minutes, and be ready to meet the other pair when you call for them.

Step 4 - Give the other pair of students in the foursome the card marked A of the matching color. Instruct them to read their cards, study their roles and be ready to meet the other pair in their foursome in a few minutes. Explain to the rest of the class that they are to act as observers to note what specific behaviors are demonstrated by both of the pairs in the role-play.

Step 5 - Bring the two pairs together and proceed with the role-play. Each situation you choose should take between 10 and 15 minutes to complete before discussion.

NOTE: YOU MIGHT WANT TO MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION. YOU COULD RUN OFF SUFFICIENT COPIES OF THE SITUATIONS TO HAVE EVERYONE DIVIDE INTO GROUPS OF FOUR AND PLAY.

Discussion

1. Were the "Americans" able to accomplish their task of either obtaining a loan or a gift from the other pair? Why were they able/not able to do so?

2. How did the students who role-played the situation with the Ords feel about their roles? Were they comfortable or uncomfortable? Was it difficult for the Ords to act out their roles? How did the "Americans" respond? Were they successful in getting the bus fare? (Some students might find it uncomfortable to touch members of the same sex in the manner described on the role sheet. Reassure them that this is certainly o.k. to feel this way.) Why do you suppose many of us would feel uncomfortable touching members of the same sex?

3. How did the foursome that role-played the situation with the Dandis feel acting out their roles? Why do you suppose North Americans might have difficulty in standing so close to people? (Point out that, for example, in many Latin American and Middle Eastern societies there are different views about proximity.)

4. Ask for comments about how students who played the roles of Cronies, Fondis, and Lindis felt about their situations. Were the "Americans" successful in these instances? Why or why not?

5. Some of the customs and mannerisms in the role-plays might have seemed sort of silly or even ridiculous at first. Which seemed this way and why?

6. What cultural customs do we as North Americans have that might seem ridiculous to some foreigners? Which ones do you think might cause difficulty in cross-cultural communication? (Example: the fact that our concept of space is different from that of many Latin Americans might cause them to resent us. If it is a sign of warmth and friendliness to stand close to another in casual conversation, then standing farther apart might indicate to them that we wish to be unfriendly.)

7. Which of the customs you saw role-played or participated in role-playing do you feel presented the MOST difficulty in cross-cultural communication and understanding?

ROLE SHEET A

You are two members of the Crony culture. As Cronies, there are certain customs your culture has instilled in you. Most importantly, you live in a matriarchal society. The females in your culture dominate all important aspects of Crony life. For example, if one had an important favor to ask of someone else in Crony, a female must ask another female. A male cannot ask an important favor of another male, and it is a strict taboo for a male to ask a female for a favor. Males do engage in discussion, but their talk is almost always idle "chit-chat". It is never of much importance. All important decisions are made by females, and all important discussion takes place between females.

It is also considered very rude for people outside your culture to ask what your customs are.

You are about to meet two Americans who are traveling through your country. After striking out on their own to find out what Crony is like, they have discovered that both of them have lost all their money. This unfortunate circumstance has left the two Americans stranded a long distance from their hotel without any money for bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Crony.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so they decide to seek help from you. Their task is to get you to loan or give them enough money for bus fare back to their hotel.

As you talk with them you are to play the roles of Cronies as described above. Unless the two Americans successfully figure out your customs and ask their favor of you in the proper manner, you should NOT grant them the loan or gift.

ROLE SHEET B

You are two Americans traveling through an unfamiliar country known as Crony. After striking out on your own to find out what the country is like, you discover that both of you have lost all of your money. This unfortunate circumstance has left both of you stranded some 50 miles from your hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Crony.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so you decide to seek help from two Crony citizens. YOUR TASK IS TO GET THE TWO CRONIES TO LOAN OR GIVE YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS FARE BACK TO YOUR HOTEL.

You know very little about Crony customs or manners or about its people. In order to accomplish your task, you are going to have to figure out what customs are important in communicating with Cronies. It is suggested that you not ask them outright what their customs are--you might offend them! Take a moment to discuss with each other WHAT you are going to say and HOW you are going to say it to accomplish your task.

ROLE SHEET A

You are two members of the Ord culture. As Ords, there are certain customs your culture has instilled in you. For one thing, you live in a society which values touching as an important part of communicating with other people of the same sex. Both sexes in Ord are reared in an atmosphere where gentle patting and hugging of the SAME sex is a normal part of conversing with them. However, this same custom of touching does not apply to members of the OPPOSITE sex. Such behavior towards a member of the opposite sex would be considered in extremely bad taste!

Equally important in Ord culture is the use of eye contact in interpersonal communication. It would be very impolite for one to take his eyes off a member of the same sex, even for a moment, during a conversation with them. However, as with the practice of touching, one simply does not look into the eyes of a member of the opposite sex when communicating with them.

It is also considered very rude for people outside your culture to ask what your customs are.

You are about to meet two Americans who are traveling through your country. After striking out on their own to find out what Ord is like, they discover that they have both lost all of their money. This unfortunate circumstance has left them both stranded a long distance from their hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Ord.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so they decide to seek help from you. Their task is to get you two to loan or give them enough money for bus fare back to their hotel.

As you talk with the two Americans you are to play the roles of Ords. Unless they successfully figure out your customs and ask their favor of you in the proper manner, you should NOT grant them the loan or gift.

ROLE SHEET B

You are two Americans traveling through an unfamiliar country known as Ord. After striking out on your own to find out what the country is like, you discover that both of you have lost all of your money. This unfortunate circumstance has left you both stranded some 50 miles from your hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Ord.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so you decide to seek help from two Ord citizens. YOUR TASK IS TO GET THE TWO ORDS TO LOAN OR GIVE YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS FARE BACK TO YOUR HOTEL.

You know very little about Ord customs or manners or about its people. In order to accomplish your task, you are going to have to figure out what customs are important in communicating with Ords. It is suggested that you not ask them outright what their customs are--you might offend them! Take a moment to discuss with each other WHAT you are going to say and HOW you are going to say it to accomplish your task.

ROLE SHEET A

You are two members of the Dandi culture. As Dandis, there are certain customs your culture has instilled in you. For one thing, you live in a culture in which correct use of the voice is very important. You have been brought up to NEVER raise the tone of your voice in a conversation, unless you are angry.

Moreover, since conversations are ordinarily carried on in such soft vocal tones in Dandi, it is necessary for people engaged in discussion to stand no farther apart than 12 inches. Between 6 and 12 inches is considered a comfortable, acceptable distance for people of both sexes to stand when conversing. People who stand farther than 12 inches apart during a conversation are considered cold and stand-offish.

It is also considered very rude for people outside your culture to ask what your customs are.

You are about to meet two Americans who are traveling through your country. After striking out on their own to find out what Dandi is like, they discover that both of them have lost all of their money. This unfortunate circumstance has left both of the Americans stranded a long distance from their hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Dandi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so they decide to seek help from you. Their task is to get you two to loan or give them enough money for bus fare back to their hotel.

As you talk with the two Americans you are to play the roles of Dandis. Unless they successfully figure out your customs and ask their favor in the proper manner, you should NOT grant them the loan or gift.

ROLE SHEET B

You are two Americans traveling through an unfamiliar country known as Dandi. After striking out on your own to find out what the country is like, you discover that both of you have lost all of your money. This unfortunate circumstance has left you both stranded some 50 miles from your hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Dandi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so you decide to seek help from two Dandi citizens. YOUR TASK IS TO GET THE TWO DANDIS TO LOAN OR GIVE YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS FARE BACK TO YOUR HOTEL.

You know very little about Dandi customs or manners or about its people. In order to accomplish your task, you are going to have to figure out what customs are important in communicating with Dandis. It is suggested that you not ask them outright what their customs are--you might offend them! Take a moment to discuss with each other WHAT you are going to say and HOW you are going to say it to accomplish your task.

ROLE SHEET A

You are two members of the Fondi culture. As Fondis, there are certain customs your culture has instilled in you. For one thing, use of correct facial expressions when communicating with others is very important. When someone says something a Fondi likes or agrees with, it is customary for the listener to cast his eyes downward and frown. By the same token, if a Fondi hears something he doesn't like or disagrees with, it is customary for the listener to smile and nod his head up and down.

Equally important in Fondi culture is the use of certain hand gestures. As a Fondi, if you were to place your hands on your hips it would signify to whomever you were speaking that you disagreed with what they were saying. Moreover, if you were to hold up your hand in front of the other person's face, palm forward, it would signify that you agreed with what the other person was saying. One important taboo exists in Fondi, however. A Fondi never touches his face or head in any manner when he is talking! Such touching of one's face or head during a conversation is considered an obscene gesture.

It is also considered very rude for people outside your culture to ask what your customs are.

You are about to meet two Americans who are traveling through your country. After striking out on their own to find out what Fondi is like, they discover that both of them have lost all of their money. This unfortunate circumstance has left them both stranded a long distance from their hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Fondi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so they decide to seek help from you. Their task is to get you two to loan or give them enough money for bus fare back to their hotel.

As you talk with the two Americans you are to play the roles of Fondis. Unless they successfully figure out your customs and ask their favor of you in the proper manner, you should NOT grant them the loan or gift.

ROLE SHEET B

You are two Americans traveling through an unfamiliar country known as Fondi. After striking out on your own to find out what the country is like, you discover that both of you have lost all of your money. This unfortunate circumstance has left you both stranded some 50 miles from your hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Fondi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so you decide to seek help from two Fondi citizens. YOUR TASK IS TO GET THE TWO FONDIS TO LOAN OR GIVE YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS FARE BACK TO YOUR HOTEL.

You know very little about Fondi customs or manners or about its people. In order to accomplish your task, you are going to have to figure out what customs are important in communicating with Fondis. It is suggested that you not ask them outright what their customs are--you might offend them! Take a moment to discuss with each other WHAT you are going to say and HOW you are going to say it to accomplish your task.

ROLE SHEET A

You are two members of the Lindi culture. As Lindis there are certain customs your culture has instilled in you. Very important among Lindis are the practices involved in giving and receiving loans and gifts. When a Lindi LOANS another person something, the recipient of the loan must immediately offer the lender something in return. The borrower must pay back the loan, but the lender gets to keep the article given him in return.

Gifts are never offered without the giver suggesting that he partake in the gift in some fashion. In other words, if a Lindi were to give another person a loaf of bread, he would expect to share part of the loaf with the recipient of the gift.

The distinction between lending and giving seems strange to many outsiders, but it originated at a time in Lindi history when loans and gifts were destroying many interpersonal relationships. Hence, the practices as outlined above were instituted.

It is also considered very rude for people outside your culture to ask what your customs are.

You are about to meet two Americans who are traveling through your country. After striking out on their own to find out what Lindi is like, they discover that both of them have lost all of their money. This unfortunate circumstance has left the two Americans stranded a long distance from their hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Lindi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so they decide to seek help from you. Their task is to get you two to loan or give them enough money for bus fare back to their hotel.

As you talk with the two Americans you are to play the roles of Lindis. Unless they successfully figure out your customs and ask their favor of you in the proper manner, you should NOT grant them the loan or gift.

ROLE SHEET B

You are two Americans traveling through an unfamiliar country known as Lindi. After striking out on your own to find out what the country is like, you discover that both of you have lost all of your money. This unfortunate circumstance has left you both stranded some 50 miles from your hotel without any bus fare. (Buses are the only motorized vehicles in Lindi.) There are no other Americans in the vicinity, so you decide to seek help from two Lindi citizens. YOUR TASK IS TO GET THE TWO LINDIS TO LOAN OR GIVE YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR BUS FARE BACK TO YOUR HOTEL.

You know very little about Lindi customs or manners or about its people. In order to accomplish your task, you are going to have to figure out what customs are important in communicating with Lindis. It is suggested that you not ask them outright what their customs are--you might offend them! Take a moment to discuss with each other WHAT you are going to say and HOW you are going to say it to accomplish your task.

Title ROLE SWITCH

Introduction

It is appropriate in the context of this study of ethnic heritage and transnational, transcultural linkages to provide opportunities for reducing ethnocentric bias about other groups. It is possible to identify several levels of understanding of another culture or ethnic group. Most curriculum limits itself to dealing only with intellectual understanding, if even that is achieved. We feel materials should provide some opportunity for you to explore deeper, more "affective" levels of understanding. We also realize that only a few of you may be able to participate in the experience outlined below. But, through sharing experiences with these who were unable to participate, the activity might enhance your understanding of differences as well.

Objective

To gain empathy for a relatively unfamiliar ethnic group, both on a personal and cultural level

Time Approximately one week

Procedure

Step 1 - Choose a partner of the same sex who is of a different ethnic group than yours. (Possible pairs: black-white; Chicano-Anglo; Irish-American-Native American; etc.)

Step 2 - Make arrangements with each other to "trade places" for a week. You should discuss at considerable length the implications of doing so. Will you feel so out of place that the activity might do you more harm than good? You should try, in as many ways as you think you are capable, to take on the life and lifestyle of each other.

Suggestions:
Live in each other's homes (You'll need to make all of the appropriate arrangements and check with parents, other relatives, etc., for permission of course!)
Speak each other's language, as much as possible, if applicable.
Wear each other's clothes.
Attend each other's church services, other family/cultural activities.
Learn and practice each other's customs, mannerisms, etc.

Step 3 - After the week's role switch, discuss the following:

1. Were each of you comfortable with the new role you took on?

2. What specific things did you learn about the other person and his/her group that you were unaware of at the beginning of the week?

3. What specific things did you learn about yourself and your attitudes about the other person's group?

4. What differences between your lifestyle and your partner's lifestyle did you find most difficult to deal with? Least difficult? Why? Do you think most people in similar situations would react this way? Explain.

Evaluation

Find a medium (written, pictures, spoken, drawings, etc.) to express your feelings about the following: MY FEELINGS ABOUT_____ ARE DIFFERENT NOW, BECAUSE_____

Title FACES

Introduction

Recognizing the ways you see and sort out differences among people can be an important step towards achieving multi-ethnic understanding. In this activity you are asked to list differences from a series of pictures. Then, you are asked how certain you are of those differences.

Time One hour

Objective

To distinguish between observable and inferred differences among people

Procedure

Step 1 - Study the faces on the accompanying pages. As you study them, make a list of all the differences among the children that you can recognize on a separate sheet of paper.

Step 2 - Place a check mark (✓) by each difference you listed that you are very sure of. Place an (0) by each difference you listed that you are not sure of.

Evaluation

1. How many of the differences you listed were you very sure of?

2. How many of the differences you listed were you not sure of?

3. Can you make a distinction between those you are sure of and not sure of? (For example, are those you're sure of physical, and those you're not sure of cultural?

4. EVERY DAY PEOPLE MAKE JUDGMENTS ABOUT OTHERS BASED ON VERY LIMITED INFORMATION. Agree or disagree? Explain.

5. It is possible to divide differences into two categories:
   (1) observable differences = those we can see, hear, touch, taste, smell
   (2) inferred differences = those we think logically follow from the differences we can observe. For example, we can observe hair texture, let us say, "curly." We might then infer a racial group, namely Negroid.

   Obviously, inferring differences can be a very risky business, because, using the example above, people in other racial groups can have curly

hair. Additional data is needed to make certain of the racial type. Moreover, the number of differences one can be certain of is very limited. Look at the bottom picture on page C. You can observe skin color--dark. But can you infer race from skin color? It might seem so, for the girl is probably Negroid. Right? Wrong! The girl is a Caucasian with comparatively dark skin from Ethiopia. Keep a record of how many times you notice yourself and others making judgments about others that are inferred. How many of these judgments can you be very sure are right? What additional data would you need to be very sure?

Title "HOW TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS FROM THE JAPS"

Introduction

The media has been said to have had a profound influence on the images we form of ethnic and racial groups. In this activity you are asked to look for examples in which differences among people are inferred from what may seem like concrete, observable differences.

Time 2-3 hours

Procedure

Step 1 - Study the article on the following page. Which of the differences listed between the two groups are observable and which are inferred according to the authors of the article?

Step 2 - Which differences can you be sure of as being accurate? (You might conclude, "very few". Chinese and Japanese are from similar anthropological bases. Fundamental differences are therefore cultural, not physical.)

Step 3 - There were, of course, important political reasons for the TIME MAGAZINE article. This issue of the magazine was the first published after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. There were many Asian Americans in the U. S. at the time. What ties between Japanese-Americans and Japanese might the authors be implying in the article?

(Suggestion: Go to the library and research the Japanese-American internment in U. S. history.)

Step 4 - As a follow-up, go to the library and search through old news magazines during certain crucial periods of recent U. S. history. Can you find other examples in which people might have become "carried away" with inferred differences and observable differences among others? Bring back these examples and share them with the rest of the class.

Below is a list of periods in recent U. S. history that you might use to get you started, but think of your own:

World War I (1914-1919)

World War II (1939-1945)

Korean War (1950-1953)

Cuban Missile Crisis (October, 1962)

Vietnam War (1961-1973)

Article titled "How to Tell Your Friends from the Japs" is from Time, December 22, 1941, page 33. It has been removed by ERIC due to copyright laws.